

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (previously presented). A method of preventing parturient hypocalcemia in an animal, comprising administering to the animal during at least part of the dry period an effective amount of a composition according to claim 14.

2 (original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the compound is administered perorally.

3-4 (cancelled).

5 (currently amended). The method according to claim ~~4~~ 1, wherein the calcium-binding compound is selected from the group consisting of zeolites, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) and its sodium salts Na₂EDTA and Na₄EDTA, a polyphosphate, a tripolyphosphate, an orthophosphate and a cellulose phosphate.

6 (previously presented). The method according to claim 5, wherein the calcium-binding compound is syntectic sodium aluminosilicate zeolite type A.

7 (original). The method according to claim 1, comprising administering to the animal during at least part of the dry period an effective amount of a compound which has a competitive effect on the absorption of calcium from the drinking water and/or from the ration of said animal.

8-9 (cancelled).

10 (original). The method according to claim 1 wherein the compound is contained in a composition which is in the form of a premix, a liquid and a powder.

11 (original). The method according to claim 10 wherein the composition is added to the drinking water and/or to the ration of the dry animal.

12 (original). The method according to claim 2, wherein at

least 10 g of the compound is administered to the animal daily.

13 (previously presented). The method according to claim 12, wherein at least 50 g of the compound is administered daily.

14 (currently amended). A composition for preventing parturient hypocalcemia in an animal, comprising, in a suitable form for peroral administration, at least one calcium-binding compound which is a zeolite, said compound(s), provided in an amount effective to reduces the absorption of calcium from the drinking water and/or from the ration of said animal, ~~said compound being selected from the group consisting of oxalic acid, sodium oxalate, phytic acid, a phytate, a clay mineral, a zeolite, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) and its sodium salts Na₂EDTA and Na₄EDTA trisodium nitrilotriacetate monohydrate, trisodium nitriloacetate, pentasodium diethylenetriaminepentaacetate, trisodium N-hydroxyethyl-ethylenediaminetriacetate, citric acid, a citrate, a polyphosphate, a tripolyphosphate, an orthophosphate and a cellulose phosphate, wherein the compound is encapsulated by a calcium-free membrane material, selected from the group consisting of a fat, a soap, a stearate, a protein, a polysaccharide, which is a cellulose, a gum, a glycol, and gelatine.~~

15-19 (cancelled).

20 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 14 wherein the compound has a competitive effect on the absorption of calcium from drinking water and/or from the ration of the animal.

21-24 (cancelled).

25 (original). The composition according to claim 14, wherein the compound is in the form of granules, pellets, or tablets.

26 (original). The composition according to claim 14 where

the composition is in the form of a premix, a liquid and a powder.

27 (original). The composition according to claim 26 where the composition is added to the drinking water and/or to the ration of the dry animal.

28 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 14 where the composition comprises at least one further ingredient.

29 (original). The composition according to claim 14 where the composition is calcium-free and non-acidifying.

30 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 14, comprising two different compounds which reduce the absorption of calcium from the drinking water and/or from the ration of said animal.

31 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 30, wherein one compound is a zeolite, and the other compound is selected from the group consisting of oxalic acid, sodium oxalate, phytic acid, a phytate, a clay mineral, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) and its sodium salts Na_2EDTA and Na_4EDTA , trisodium nitrilotriacetate monohydrate, trisodium nitriloacetate, pentasodium diethylenetriaminepentaacetate, trisodium N-hydroxyethyl-ethylenediaminetriacetate, citric acid, a citrate, a polyphosphate, a tripolyphosphate, an orthophosphate and a cellulose phosphate.

32-34 (cancelled).

35 (previously presented). The composition of claim 14 where said membrane material, at the body temperature of the lactating animal, is solid at a pH value above 4.0, and dissolves at pH below 4.0.